

R 281604Z MAR 91  
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0964  
INFO RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMCONSUL ADANA  
AMCONSUL ISTANBUL  
AMCONSUL IZMIR

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 04277

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PREL PTER ENRG TU SY  
SUBJECT: SYRIA, THE PKK AND WATER

REF: ANKARA 3909

¶1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

¶2. MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA SOLMAZ UNAYDIN GAVE POL COUNSELOR MARCH 27 ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS INTO THE TURKISH-SYRIAN DIALOGUE ON THE PKK. SHE SAID FOREIGN MINISTER ALPTEMOCIN HAD RAISED THE SUBJECT EXPLICITLY WITH ASAD DURING HIS FEBRUARY VISIT TO DAMASCUS. ASAD REPORTEDLY TOLD ALPTEMOCIN SYRIA WOULD TAKE CARE OF THE PROBLEM BUT "IT WOULD TAKE TIME." UNAYDIN THOUGHT REPORTS THAT PKK LEADER OCALAN HAD BEEN PLACED UNDER HOUSE ARREST DURING FOREIGN MINISTER SHARA'S RECENT VISIT TO ANKARA WERE INDICATIVE OF A SYRIAN EFFORT TO REIN IN THE PKK.

¶3. NEVERTHELESS, SHE SAID IT IS CLEAR THAT DAMASCUS CONTINUES TO LINK CONTROL OF THE PKK TO THE WATER ISSUE. SHARA HAD BROUGHT A WATER EXPERT WITH HIM ON THIS LATEST TRIP TO EXPLORE THE TECHNICAL REQUIREMENT FOR TURKEY TO SHUT OFF THE FLOW OF EUPHRATES WATER FOR 2-3 DAYS PER MONTH (THE LATEST CLOSURE WAS MARCH 24/25). THE SYRIAN EXPERT TRAVELED TO THE ATATURK DAM AFTER SHARA'S DEPARTURE. HE IS STILL THERE. AS UNAYDIN EXPLAINED IT, THE POND BEHIND THE DAM IS FILLING AT A SLOWER THAN EXPECTED RATE AND TURKISH ENGINEERS FEAR THERE IS LEAKAGE. TO LOCATE THIS, THEY MUST CUT OFF ALL EUPHRATES FLOW PERIODICALLY. THUS FAR, ACCORDING TO UNAYDIN, NO LEAK HAS BEEN FOUND.

GROSSMAN